1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19 sia RC1

where they believe their gods live. It was only when the sun began to burn our bodies that they approached me to chat. They expressed their concern over my illness and soon busied themselves to make me as comfortable as possible. While I distributed among them a few presents bought for them in Urbana, and turned all of the food over to Landaeta, the younger men were busy building a sun shelter, an arbor of the sweet-smelling guava bush, though for themselves they had only branches thrust into the sands, giving only a thin shade. From now on, I was completely in their care, and they were careful nurses and tender friends. The best of the hunt was mine, and even the women delighted in taking care of my clothing, and in bringing me delicacies.

They were glad to see me, and the women shamans soon began their chants while the men surrounded me and told me in their own language and in broken Spanish what had occurred the previous night. [562] Men are prohibited from singing during the day, but the women sit in swinging hammocks and chant their songs. I learned, too, that Landaeta's daughter had not died, for there she was, grateful and shyly looking at me, completely well. They attributed her cure to me, though I was not at all responsible for it. During the night, they told me, the gods had come among us, and told them that I, too, was one of Kuma's children, and again they insisted that I was related to them.

I learned that Puaná and Itciai are cocreators with Kuma, the mother goddess, and they are directly responsible for the actual creation of the world. Hatchawa, in the form of a litttle boy, is another god who has given mankind fire, the bow and arrow, and many other blessings. Now, when the shaman sings at night his soul leaves his body and travels to the land of Kuma, leaving his body behind. The gods may come then, enter his body in the form of songs, and transmit their messages to the Yaruros. They had come the night before to greet me and to reassure my friends of my goodness and my own powers of shamanism.

We sat, smoked, and talked all day. In the afternoon we feasted on crocodile, turtle eggs, wild roots, palm nuts, and honey. Finishing our dinner, we sat quietly facing the west, watching the skies. As the sun set low again, rays of gold, blue, and white shot into the sky from the horizon, and my friends rejoiced at this certain greeting of Kuma to us.

Darkness came upon us, and in anticipation of a long night of singing and dancing—I could sing but could not dance, since I could not stand up—I lay on the sands to rest before the beginning of the ceremonies, but the skies interested the Yaruros and they came to tell me what they read there. The brightness of the stars and the changing

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251 During the rainy season the seed of the chigua is gathered. It is crushed, toasted, and stored in small quantities in the same way as the changuango, provided, of course, that a spot is found high enough to keep it dry.

Social Organization and Social Customs

596 616 622 791 554 Economically the family hunting group is the basic unit, as has been shown in the previous chapter. In social matters, however, it is the moiety. Each family hunting group recognizes a headman and each moiety recognizes a chief who in all cases is the shaman. Both of these positions of authority are acquired only through personal merit. There is no inheritance of chieftainship or shamanism. If the nephew of a headman shows ability he may inherit his uncle's position, and theoretically this is the scheme. In natural practices we find that not only the Yaruros but perhaps a great many other primitive peoples are very realistic and are loath to give authority to an individual whose personality does not stand for leadership.

616 428 Every Yaruro is born in either the "Itciai" or "Puaná" moiety. Descent, with its social affinities, prerogatives, and obligations, being traced through the female line, the child belongs to its mother's moiety. Nothing is inherited from the father, who belongs to the other moiety, except obligations.

616 773 There is a legend among the Yaruros that two young men not finding any marriageable girls among their own people mated with the Jaguar and with the Snake. From these two unions are descended the two moieties. Since only among animals do brothers and sisters mate it has become a rule that two descendants of the Jaguar, "Itciai", cannot marry with each other; nor can two descendants of the Snake, "Puaná", marry with each other. They must seek a mate from the other group. Thus an "Itciai" must always marry a "Puaná", and vice versa. Cross-cousin marriage solves this problem.

582 604 In this system, therefore, a man's children belong to his wife's moiety, from which he is socially excluded. His sister's children, on the other hand, are socially close to him since they too inherit moiety membership from their mother which is the same as his own. Deprived of his own children to carry on his traditions, a man looks to his sister's children to take their place. It is his nephews who will help him in hunting, who will come to his defence, who will take care of him in old age. As if in payment of such attention he gives them his daughters in marriage. Thus his sisters' sons become his sons-in-law.

621 596 Yaruro society is built around the hunting group, which in numbers is never stable. The hunt and the gathering of food such as roots and fruits calls for a certain amount of cooperative effort, but

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LIFE CYCLE

BIRTH

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Biological conception is clearly understood. One of the myths tells of Kuma's desire to have a child. She asked Puaná to impregnate her in the thumb, but Puaná, who in these myths appears both as trickster and wise man, told her that such impregnation would result in an overpopulation and advised her to allow herself to be impregnated in the ordinary way. She allowed herself to be persuaded, and Hatchawa was born. It may be worth noting that though Hatchawa was the issue, he is referred to as the grandson of Kuma. Whether this inconsistency is to us merely an unexplainable situation, or whether it has greater significance, I was not able to find out.

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When delivery is imminent a shelter is built for the prospective mother, apart from all other people. Her husband's moiety brothers build a similar structure for him also apart from the camp. The woman is tended by the women of her family and moiety and the husband by the men belonging to his moiety. Both abstain from eating fish, turtle, and crocodile. Iguana and deer meat and the usual vegetable diet are allowed. During delivery and for 10 days after the husband lies in a hammock and engages in no physical activity. Ordinarily he would sleep on the ground. His moiety brothers bring him food. After 10 days he visits his wife but continues to live alone and apart for a month. Now he hunts in the company of other men and is expected to supply his wife with food. The food taboos continue in effect for the full month for both husband and wife. Strict continence is practiced by the husband. When the month is over the family is reunited.

MENSTRUATION

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The Yaruro's actual attitude toward menstruation is not one of fear or wonder. The phenomenon is accepted much as it is among us, as a disturbing but unavoidable event. In the literature on primitive peoples it is often reported that menstruation is held to be a dangerous period for the woman and for the people. One may question the correctness of this observation, if observation it be, with the suspicion that because certain taboos are observed fear is the motivating response. I have found the observance of taboos among a dozen South American tribes with whom I have had personal contact but there has been no indication of actual fear. One wonders if such events have not been too highly dramatized and rationalized by the civilized visitor rather than by the primitives.

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Among the Yaruros the first period in a girl calls for special treatment at the hands of the women. The girl's face is covered with a

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772 177 terial existing in the literature at the present time is too scant to give us much of a lead. For the Llanos of Venezuela we have only the missionaries' accounts of the middle of the eighteenth century, meager accounts at best, and highly colored by the ideas of the missionaries themselves. But even these give us no idea as to how the Yaruros thought and behaved in those days. They give us notes only on the Otomacos and the Saliva. Perhaps material exists in unpublished form, but it must remain unknown for the purpose of the study.

• 773 In the mythology and in the shamanistic cult a number of figures stand out: Kuma, the mother goddess; Puaná, the great snake; Hatchawa, the culture hero; and Itciai, the jaguar. A more obscure figure is Kiberoh, who seems to be identified with a female evil spirit, but in one legend appears as the mate of Kuma. And an even more confused figure is India Rosa. It is known that the patron saint of the early Spaniards was Santa Rosa de Lima. If India Rosa is to be identified with Santa Rosa among the Yaruros, only the name has persisted. The confusion will become evident on reading the text.

773 177 The creation legend exists in various forms, but which of them represents the purely aboriginal one it is difficult if not impossible to determine. It seems best to give all versions. The myth of the flood appears also, and whether or not this is a foreign element in Yaruro mythology cannot be determined at this time. Of great interest to us are the ethical elements present in these stories. In the legend of the impregnation of Kuma, presumably by Puaná, the water snake, one may see a parallel to the story of Eve and the Serpent. Be that as it may, Puaná the Snake, Itciai the Jaguar, Kuma the Mother Goddess, and Hatchawa, the culture hero, are living spiritual forces among the Yaruros today, godheads who visit the Yaruro frequently during shamanistic performances and speak to the Yaruros through the mouth of the shaman. It would be too much to expect that all our facts should fit together into a logical pattern. The legendary world is never a well-ordered one and it speaks for the genuineness of Yaruro culture that we find such complex.

773 It will be noted that Kuma is definitely the Mother Goddess who gave birth to Hatchawa and to human beings. The latter were found by Hatchawa living under the ground. Hatchawa is always the culture hero. It is he who takes compassion on humanity and gives the fire, the bow and the arrow, and presumably a great many other things. Puaná, the Water Snake, is not only the shaper of the earth, but it is he who is given credit for great wisdom. Itciai, on the other hand, plays a very small role. In our legends he appears as a shaper or creator of the waters but plays no other part. But perhaps this [216] obscurity of Itciai is to be attributed to the fact that my informants belong to the Puaná moiety.

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781 Of great importance is the fact that the Yaruros live in a world which they understand perfectly. At night they watch the heavens for signs from their gods. Each night they read a new chapter in a great story book. During the day the winds, the skies, the sun, have much to tell them, and they watch and listen eagerly. Their world is not one of fear but one which, as created by Kuma, is excessively friendly and hopeful. Terror has been introduced by the white man.

771 For every species of plant and animal life a gigantic counterpart exists in the Land of Kuma. Originally the plants and animals, which have been domesticated by the white man, were given to the Yaruros, but the size of the horse and cattle frightened the Yaruros so much that they refused to mount one or tame the other. The white man seized the opportunity which has since made him master of the Yaruro country. However, they have no explanation for the superiority of the white race except sheer wickedness. This superiority is so startling sometimes that the Yaruros feel that the white man in some way must be closely affiliated with gods, good or bad. The appearance of the white man on the plains of Apure is a legendary event. A white man, the Yaruros say, appeared on a huge horse. He was covered with foul sores and destroyed everything in his path. The Yaruros are content to hunt and cultivate the soil. The result is that the civilized peoples raise crops, store them, but the Yaruros are condemned to wander about hunting for a daily dinner.

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825 Many of the animal species, natural formations and constellations are to the Yaruros metamorphosed races of man. One explanation for the monkeys, especially the araguatos (the howlers), is that they are the descendants of a group of people who, to save themselves, climbed to the top of a tree during the time of the flood. The caymans represent another race of men who failed to take advantage of Hatchawa's rope to be lifted out of the hole in the ground. The toninos also are a race of metamorphosed humans.

186 773 The Yaruro, according to their conception of mankind, were Kuma's chosen people. They were created first of all the Indian tribes and that is why they were given the open plains to live in with an open sky overhead so that they might be in close touch with Kuma day and night. The Guahibos, on the other hand, or as the Yaruros called them, the Tciricoi, the forest people, were created last and occupy an inferior position.

776 774 In addition to playing a purely religious role, the gods function as ethical teachers in every shamanistic performance, a function which is shared by the spirits who are close relatives of the living Yaruros. It is they who visit their living descendants and speak through the body of the shaman, correct abuses, scold the evildoers, and praise the good.

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CREATION LEGEND

VERSION I

At first there was nothing. Then Puaná the Snake, who came first, created the world and everything in it, including the river courses, except the water. Itciai the Jaguar created the water. Kuma was the first person to people the land. Then the other people were created. Then came India Rosa from the east. The Guahibos were created last. That is the reason that they live in the forest.

Horses and cattle were given to the Yaruros. However, they were so large that the Yaruros were afraid to mount them. The "Racionales" were not afraid, and so the horses were given to them.

The sun travels in a canoe from east to west. At night it goes to Kuma's land. The stars are her children and they wander about at night. The moon, which is a sister to the sun, travels in a boat.

On the land of Kuma exists a large plant of each species. The plants which are cultivated by the Racionales were first given to the Yaruros. The Yaruros cut them down in such a way that the tops fell in the land of the Racionales. The roots remained in the land of the Yaruros, but the Racionales got the seed and that is why they have bananas, plantains, maize, tobacco, and the Yaruros have none of those things.

VERSION II

Everything sprang from Kuma, and everything that the Yaruros do was established by her. She is dressed like a shaman, only her ornaments are of gold and much more beautiful.

With Kuma sprang Puaná and Itciai; Hatchawa is her grandson and Puaná made a bow and arrow for him. Puaná taught Hatchawa to hunt and fish. When Hatchawa saw the people at the bottom of a hole and wished to bring them to the top Puaná made him a rope and a hook.

Another figure that sprang with Kuma was Kiberoh. She carried fire in her breast and at Kuma's request gave it to the boy Hatchawa. But when the boy wanted to give it to the people Kuma refused and he cleverly threw live fish in the fire, spreading coals all about. The people seized the hot coals and ran away to start fires of their own. Everything was at first made and given to the boy and he passed it on to the people. Everybody sprang from Kuma, but she was not made pregnant in the ordinary way. It was not necessary.

VERSION III

The first to appear was Kuma, the chief of all of us and the entire world. Itciai, Puaná, and Kiberoh appeared with her. There was nothing then. Nothing had been created. Kuma was made

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pregnant. She wanted to be impregnated in the thumb but Puaná told her that too much progeny would be produced that way. So she was made pregnant in the ordinary way. Hatchawa was born, grandchild (?) of Kuma, Puaná, and Itciai. From then on the attention of the three was centered on the boy. Puaná created the land; Itciai the water in the rivers. Hatchawa was very small, but soon grew to a very large size. Kuma and Puaná took care of his education, though Puaná took more care of him. Puaná made a bow and arrow for him and told him to hunt and fish. Hatchawa found a hole in the ground one day and looked into it. He saw many people. He went back to his grandparents to ask them to get some of the people out. Kuma did not want to let the people come out, but Hatchawa insisted on it. Pauná made a thin rope and hook and dropped it into the hole. The people came out, just as many men as women. Finally a pregnant woman tried to come out and she broke the thin rope in getting out. That is the reason there are few people.

The world was dark and cold. There was no fire. Puaná had made the earth and everything on it, and Itciai had created the water. Hatchawa took a live jagupa (a fish) and threw it into the fire which was kept burning in the center of Kuma-land, a high circular pasture. The little fish struggled and knocked coals all about, and the people ran away in all directions with the coals. One part of these people were the Yaruros. Then Kuma wanted to give the horse to them, but the Pumeh (Yaruros) were afraid to mount it.

Of every plant in Kuma land there exists (or existed) a gigantic type, so big that an ax can't cut it. Of every animal there exists a gigantic representative.

Version IV

India Rosa is the same as big Kuma. This Kuma lives in her city in the east. She is either the wife or sister of the sun. She is the younger sister of the other Kuma. She taught the women to make pottery and weave basketry in the same way as Puaná taught the men. Itciai and the other Kuma look after everything.

Version V

At first there was nothing. The snake, who came first, created the world and everything in it, including the water courses, but did not create the water itself. The jaguar, the brother of the snake, created the water. The people of India Rosa were the first to people the land. After them, the other people were created. India Rosa came from the east. The Guahibos were created last. That is the reason that they live in the bush.

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Horses and cattle were given first to the Yaruros. However, they were so large that the Yaruros were afraid to mount them. The "Racionales" were not afraid, and so they were given the horse.

The sun travels in a boat from the east. It goes to a town at night. The stars are his children and they go out from the town at night. The moon, who is a sister of the sun, also travels in a boat.

VERSION VI

A woman who came from the east went to live with the sun at his village in the west. She taught women how to do everything which women do. The sun taught the men. The sun and India Rosa are married, and probably were the first people from whom everyone has sprung. But the sun and India Rosa came out of the ground. They had children. Everything was dark at that time. The children dispersed in all directions. They became the different peoples of the world. Then everything was covered with water. Horses were given to the people but they were afraid and would not ride them. But a white man sick with smallpox rode the horse, and then the horse was given to his people. He asked the Yaruros to kill him and they did. Then his people killed the Yaruros.

VERSION VII

India Rosa came first. She gave birth to a son and a daughter. The son impregnated his sister, who gave birth to all humanity. India Rosa went west, the daughter went east. The son is the sun. The moon is the daughter. The snake came afterwards, and the jaguar created the water.

VERSION VIII

Kuma was first. God appeared. Had two children, brother and sister, and they married. There were no human beings at that time. One day Kuma said, "Let us have some people". So God went out to see about it. He found a man in a hole. He went back to Kuma, consulted with her, and went back to the man with a hook and a rope. A pregnant woman wanted to be the first to come out of the hole, but she was left to the last. Many people were brought out. The last to be brought out was the pregnant woman, and then the rope broke. The world was dark and cold. So God made a fire. A fish appeared and scattered it, so that each person could take a little of the fire. That is why all people have fire today. The people married among themselves. One of the woman descendants of India Rosa married a man of the new race and from them sprang the Yaruros. This was welcomed because the father of the girl said,

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773 "Here, a son-in-law will take care of me now!" Then the Yaruros
539 lived. The shaman had a nephew and a son. The nephew fell in love with his own sister and married—he was changed into a jaguar and she into a snake (?). If it had not been for this there would not have been any snakes and jaguars. Human beings should not marry their own sisters. It was ordered by Kuma. Animals are different.

Then one man found a tree with all the fruits on it. He did not tell the others. A white man appeared on horseback. Said he would come back in eight days. He came back in a boat. Scattered seeds everywhere. Thus he changed the country. Before it was all open savanna, but now forests and agricultural products grew.

India Rosa taught the women. God taught the men. God wanted to give the horse to the Yaruros, but they were afraid to mount, so he gave it to the Racionales instead.

KUMA

791 Presumably, Kuma is anthropomorphic. The only ones among
776 the Yaruros who have any knowledge of this mythical being who is re-
787 sponsible for the world are the shamans. These individuals are loath to discuss what they see in their dreams, claiming that all they have to say about such things are said during their shamanistic performances. Besides, they claim that they do not remember what they see during their trances.

531 Nevertheless, on the rattles appear graphic representations of what
776 Kuma is supposed to look like. In all cases, she seems to resemble
534 a human being, standing with her arms extended upward in greeting to her people. Such figures are represented on the gourd rattles shown in plate 24 and figures 25, 26, 27. It was explained that the lines
[301] appearing on the body of Kuma represent body painting and ornaments.

776 Of all the godheads or spirit forces of the Yaruros, Kuma is the most clear-cut. She is the creator of all things, and everything emanates from her. Her associates, Puaná, Itciai, and Hatchawa, function according to the laws of Kuma. Apparently they are not able to do anything without her consent, but occasionally she may be tricked. For instance, when Hatchawa decided to give fire to the people he threw a live fish into Kuma's fire. The wriggling of the fish scattered the coals, which the people seized and carried away.

Kuma is represented neither as an indulgent mother nor as an entirely benevolent creature in the myths. It is Hatchawa and Puaná who favor human beings. In fact, Kuma was opposed to peopling the earth with the human race. In spite of this there is no

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776 [616] strong implication both in the myths and the saying he attends to his people, especially those belonging to the snake moiety, that Puaná is also anthropomorphic. I believe that the conception of the godheads is not quite as clear among the Yaruros as we who attempt to rationalize his beliefs would like it to be. Puaná stands closer to the members of his moiety than does even Kuma. During the shamanistic performances led by Landaeta the singing and dancing were rather sluggish until it was announced by the shaman that Puaná was on his way, and when Puaná reached the shaman's body there was unbounded rejoicing which put fresh spirit into the singing and the dancing. No such enthusiasm was apparent even when Kuma approached. We may contrast the attitude toward Kuma and Puaná as one of respect and one of familiar love.

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HATCHAWA

Hatchawa is the culture hero of the Yaruros. It is he who interceded with Kuma about giving fire to the human race, and it is he who begged Puaná to make a bow which he passed on to his people. He is credited with being the direct instrument and also the means by which the Yaruros have acquired knowledge of hunting. When Hatchawa arrives among the Yaruros during shamanistic performances he is received gladly and thankfully.

ITCIAI

All of the shamans with whom I spoke and whose performances I attended belong to the Puaná clan. They knew little of Itciai and were not interested in telling me much about this rival to Puaná. Itciai seems to be identified with the jaguar, but he is not anthropomorphic. He is given credit for having created the water in the rivers, but, as if they were jealous of even this attribute, my informants said that "Itciai created only the water in the rivers."

FLOOD LEGEND

773 539 After the people were created and had lived on this earth a long time they began to forget to do the right thing. They no longer believed that Kuma is the mother of water and the entire universe and everything that there is in it. So Kuma, in order to show them that she was the creator of the universe and everything therein, caused a rain to begin which continued until everything was covered over with water except a tree on the upper Capanaparo, and the top of a hill. A man and his sister took refuge on the very topmost branches of the tree, and a man with his aunt saved themselves by staying on top of this hill.

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Everything was covered with water and these four survivors of the human race suffered great hunger for many days. Those on the tree ate the leaves, and the bark, and some of the wood itself. Those on the hill not only suffered great hunger but were menaced also by a huge fish that wanted to eat them and kept on swimming around and around the hill. Finally Kuma stopped the rain. The first day after the rain stopped the waters withdrew one arm's length. The people ate what they found on the exposed land. The second day the waters withdrew two arm lengths. The people had nothing to hunt with. There were no trees out of which to make bows and arrows, since everything had been destroyed by the waters. Finally the turtles began to come out of the water and the people were able to catch some of them. Everything was clean of vegetation and flat, but they managed to gather food enough to live. After some days the one man said to the other, "Look here! We are all alone. Why don't you marry my sister and I will marry your aunt!" The other replied, "Very good; but I must ask my aunt if she is willing to marry you." So he asked his aunt and she consented to marry the man. The two men then married the women. They then had children. The man's aunt gave birth to a girl, and the sister of the other man gave birth to two boys. When the older boy was sufficiently grown up his father told him to marry the girl who was his cousin. The boy answered his father that he was no good for marriage, that he was not able to hunt enough food, or do anything else well, and that he could not have sexual relations with women. So the man waited until the younger son was old enough, and this boy married the girl. They had children and they married each other. But there were not enough girls, so the two boys married the children of the snake and the jaguar and went to live with them.

The uncle of these children, he who had not been able to marry, and who knew many things, did not like brother and sister marriage. To show them that they were like wild beasts he changed the boys into a jaguar and a snake. Then he tried to change them back again, but after twelve days he gave it up. He was not able to do it. Then he called the people together and told them that in the future they should not marry their sisters, since marriage between brother and sister is practiced only by the wild animals, and that if they did they also would be changed to snakes and jaguars, and that he was powerless to change them back again. He told them to marry their cousins, that is, the cross cousins. And he told them that those who descended from the snake should marry those who descended from the jaguar. That is how the Yaruros, who are the descendants of these people, are related to the snakes and jaguars.

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village to village, since each village constitutes a separate and independent center of relationships with neighboring villages and consequently has its own unique assortment of outside relationships, based partly on choice. This situation, like so many other aspects of the socio-economic organization is reflected in the cosmology.

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According to the Yaruro, the cosmos originally lacked not only humans, but even gods. There existed only three concentric, rigid, blue, celestial domes; below them, a flat, undifferentiated, vast savana all of sand; and a cold, dark, flat underworld. Beyond these there was, and is, nothing. Thunder, already then, was to be found between the upper celestial domes, while Sun, his wife, Moon, and their children, the stars, were already revolving between the lower two.

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Into this cosmos were spontaneously born the primordial gods. The goddess Ku'ma^{n}, the grandmother of us all, who lives in a land to the west, out of the savana created the discrete lands of her fellow gods and of the Yaruro. She created the non-Yaruro peoples, the *nivé*, first, and the Yaruro, the *pumé*, last, which is why there are so few - there were few left to create. She ordered Kiberó, the female toad who lives in the dark underworld to give fire, which she belched from her belly. Ku'ma^{n} created the foods wich are collected and the modes of preparing them. She instructed the men and the women in their crafts. She ordained the social order. Her husband, Poa'na^{n}, the snake god, who lives in a land to the south, created the characteristic savana features: the rivers, the woods, the grasses for the animals to eat.

He taught men the technology of horticulture and gave them the seeds of the garden crops. He, with his fellow god, Icial, who lives in a land to the north and was born a boy given to troublemaking though he later matured, then taught the arts of hunting and fishing. Poa'na^{n} son, Hachawa, who lives in a land to the east, created only the ceremonial cigarettes. The four godly other-worlds lie beyond the Great Water which surrounds, but is not quite contiguous to, the Yaruro hither world. This geographical break in the cosmos is negligible, however, since the hither-world and the other-worlds become continuous in the thought and action of the Yaruro. The Great Water continues in an endless expanse beyond the four other-worlds, according to one interpretation, while in another, it is said to be enclosed by limitless, unpeopled and empty savanas. The four Yaruro other-worlds are also inhabited by a younger generation of gods all possessing Spanish names. Some interpreters identify these with the primordial gods. Others do not. According to some informants, they live in the same lands as the older gods. Others say they live in different lands. Such variations of religious interpretation occur frequently despite general agreement in all essentials. Individual freedom of choice and interpretation, already noted in connection with economic choice and social interrelationships, is also found in relation to ideology.

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The godly other-worlds are generally described as idealized versions of the Yaruro hab'tat. This is true also of a fifth otherworld, one which is discontinuous geographically, conceptually, and behaviorally with the rest of the Yaruro worlds, though similar in form. This is the land of Dios, the God of

4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

Christian Venezuelans, which lies between the two lower celestial domes and existed prior to Ku'maⁿ.

It is to be noted that Ku'maⁿ was not responsible for creating her fellow primordial gods. She is not an omnipotent creator but is fundamentally limited to creating other-world and hither-world things familiar to the Yaruro. She exists in an independent but loosely coordinate status with other celestial beings or phenomena like Thunder, Sun, Moon, the stars, the rainbow, and possibly Dios — the prototype for personal status among the Yaruro. Furthermore, despite wide variation in creation myths, the fact stands out, too, that she must almost equal honors with Poa'naⁿ in the creation of all that is vital to the Yaruro in the hither-world in a creational division of labor closely paralleling the division of labor found in the actual economy. Further, Ku'maⁿ and Poa'naⁿ, by the link of marriage, provide a prototype for the essential productive and distributional unit, the household. Hachawa, their son according to some informants, and Icial, Poa'naⁿ s'ster's son, both boys at the time of the creation, contribute little and are as much nuisance as help until they have matured, an apt reflection of the position of children in Yaruro economy. Today Poa'naⁿ and Ku'maⁿ seem preeminent in status among the gods, but at the same time are definitely merely *primi inter pares*, occupying the position of more experienced elders within the community of the gods, each of whom acts autonomously according to his own dictates.

The community of the gods is again prototypic for Yaruro hither-world life. Each god and his land constitutes a sort of village community populated by the god or gods, by dead *pumé*, by dead animals, and by the regular other-worldly animal population especially jaguars in human form and dress. The human-like inhabitants of the other-world eat, drink, dance, have sex relations, and visit from god's land to god's land. They enter into the web of kinship which ties the gods to each other, to the dead Yaruro, and to the live *pumé* of the hither-world in complex, if varying, genealogical connections. Even the great jaguar god, T.ó whose bailiwick is the first celestial dome and whose main task, under the general direction of Ku'maⁿ, is to cure, is considered distantly related and of the family of Poa'naⁿ. A number of animal species are similarly distantly related, but like those Yaruro who cannot be fitted into the kinship system, are merely connected to us nominally. The gods, the dead, and the live *pumé* equally observe kinship obligations. Thus kinship and visits among the autonomous lands of the gods are the chief ties holding the four other-worlds together, a prototype for Yaruro village and social structure. (3)

However, in relationship to the living, Ku'maⁿ is 'our chief'. More than any other god, she is turned to for advice, for ethical reaffirmations, and for fulfilment of needs. It is first to Ku'maⁿ bright and golden land that the *pumé* go at death, during unconsciousness, in dreams, and during the religious ceremonies, the *tonghés*. The other lands are visited later and are less important in the other-worldly journeys made by the living. The dead of Ku'maⁿ land are the first to be called upon by the shaman when, during the *tonghés*, he arrives in the other-worlds. He asks them, as well as Ku'maⁿ and the other gods, to

(3) Eliade (1954) emphasizes this prototypic quality of "primitive" ideologies throughout the book.

/10 cont./

Y 186 10 These are in fact presented as enemies or inferiors. The Otomaco, on the contrary, appear to have been friends or relatives who were superior to them. This hierarchy is apparently confirmed by the Yaruro myth of the creation of men (12) where

Y 186 773

12. See "infra" IV List...38.

the Otomaco were the first brought out of a hole in the ground by the masculine divinity Iţiai, the Yaruro arriving only in second place, followed by the other Indians and the Racionales who were the last born. Their birth took place, in addition, just after that of Iţiai but before the flood which submerged the world and only after which the Yaruro were born.

O Y 773 776 The Otomaco seem to have the same divinities and religious manifestations as the Yaruro, as comes out from the words of our informant, Pedro Ramón Camacho, reproduced word for word below.

"They knew who the Kuma (13) was and they were loved by

13. Female Yaruro divinity.

O 776 the Gods. Now in the other world whereas the dead of the other Indians inhabit an isolated village located at the edge of the Universe, on the shore of the sea and some leagues from the Kuma's village, the Otomaco live a little lower than the Kuma's village, like from here to the corridor of forest (some 200 meters), in a village perched on the /11/ mountain. They called the Kuma, Iţiai, and Puana (14) by their names.

14. Another masculine Yaruro divinity, Iţiai's brother.

O Y 775 776 They had, like us, tiyo (protecting spirits represented by stones or pottery remains) and when my spirit walks along the

/11 cont./

O Y 775 776 way which leads to the other world it will meet after the village of the tiyo of Ijiai, at the left, on the same side, the tiyo of the Otomaco. They sang and danced (shamanistic ceremony) during the day when Kuma and Ijiai were still living on earth. When they ran off into the other world they continued to sing and dance but at night. During their songs they walked, the old men of past times used to say."

Y 533 539 Pedro Ramón Camacho completed his account with a quatrain of this song which had been repeated to him by a grandfather, but the meaning of which he did not know:

gwačarka hihi gwačarka hihi
gwačarka hihi gwačarka hihi
pidęruba pidęruba pidęruba hihi
pidęruba pidęruba pidęruba hihi

Y 773 825 136 The Otomaco are presented in Yaruro legends as being in the beginning three animals: the mono (15), the araguato (16),

15. Monkey (Cebus nigrivittatus), in Venezuelan.

16. Howling monkey (Alouetta ursina), in Venezuelan.

and the chigüíre (17).

17. Capybara, large amphibious rodent (Hydrochoerus hydrochoeris), in Venezuelan.

Y 773 825 The transformation of the Otomaco into monos and araguatos seems to have occurred at the time of the flood unleashed by Ijiai to cleanse the world of all the moral disorder which reigned there. Some Otomaco took refuge in the trees

/11 cont./

773 825 out of reach of the waters, having refused to shelter themselves on an elevated knoll as Iʃiai ordered them to do. The latter, to punish them, condemned them and all their family to become "monos and araguatos who will eat henceforth," he told them, "leaves, fruit, chiga (18), etc...."

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18. Chigo grain (Campsiandra comosa), from which the Yaruro apparently extract flour.

The origin of the chigüíre is illustrated on its part by the text reproduced next:

1st version (literal translation)

"Once upon a time, when the Kuma still lived on earth, an old Otomaco pume (19). The Kuma had a little gourd

19. In Yaruro: man or Yaruro.

full of mosquitos (20) and plaga (21) and one day the Otomaco

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20. Diurnal wounding gnats (Similium haemapotum Malloch), in Venezuelan.

21. Nocturnal mosquitoes, in Venezuelan.

asked her: "What is this, grandmother?" "No, son," she answered him, "do not try to uncork it because they are Iʃiai's sons. If you uncork it, /12/ the little beasts will eat you." The Otomaco, the old pume, was stubborn and in an inattentive moment of the Kuma uncorked the little receptacle near a river. In an instant he was covered with bites and threw himself into the water. Then Iʃiai said to him that for

Y /12 cont./
773 having been disobediant he was going to serve as food for the
825 pumę's and be transformed into chigüíre. In the same instant he was transformed into chigüíre."

2nd version (literal translation)

"The Kuma had a little receptacle filled with plaga and all kinds of zancudos (22). A pumę, the chigüíre, the

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22. Anopheles mosquitoes (Cellia argyritarsis), in Venezuelan.

Otomaco asked Kuma what kind of animal was in the receptacle. She answered that they were dangerous zancudos and that he must not open it because that would present danger. The Otomaco said: "I am going to open it." Then he opened the receptacle and thus the plaga came. If he had not opened it there would have been no plaga. When he had opened the receptacle, the mosquitoes began to bite him. The Otomaco threw himself into the water because he could not stand the bites and was transformed into chigüíre because he had disobeyed. Iţiai said to him: "You did not want to obey, you will be transformed into chigüíre which the pumę's will kill to feed upon." The bristles of the chigüíres are the zancudos. The present chigüíres are the sons of those who have disobeyed."

O 101 131 Otomaco territory seems to have been situated north of that of the Yaruro, around the place where they supposedly were created: Los Caballos, near the Río Cunaviche. "All these dunes," Pedro Ramón Camacho said to us word for word, and at the same time his hand made a one-quarter turn of the horizon toward the north, "were once covered with Otomaco villages. The remains of pimpina (23), of plates, of

D 172 415
Y 173

23. A pitcher of porous earthenware used as a water-cooler in Venezuelan.